

Colorado Department of Higher Education

Position Announcement: Chief Operating Officer

THE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Department of Higher Education is to improve the quality of, ensure the affordability of, and promote access to, postsecondary education for the people of Colorado. In pursuing its mission, the Department of Higher Education will act as an advocate for the students and institutions of postsecondary education and will coordinate and, as needed, regulate the activities of the state's postsecondary education institutions.

THE POSITION

The Chief Operating Officer plays a hands-on, senior-level role in the Colorado Department of Higher Education reporting directly to the Executive Director. The Chief Operating Officer will have high level management skills along with top-level strategic insight and the ability to assist in the implementation of department initiatives.

Internally, the COO will be part of a team of approximately 100 staff and managers in seven divisions and will work with the Executive Director to manage the Department and to provide leadership to the senior management team on all strategic matters regarding state-level activities. This position is particularly vital for the implementation of the State's Master Plan and related performance funding model, as well as coordinating state-level policies to meet the education, workforce training, and economic development needs of the State. In addition, the COO will be responsible for creating a cohesive and collaborative team operating ethic among the department's various divisions and will coordinate and support all department operations.

Externally, the COO will help the Executive Director to build and cultivate relationships with higher education stakeholders including policymakers, college administrators, K-12 educators and administrators, employers, and public and private partners. The position will support all essential job functions of the Executive Director, including, when appropriate, serving as his surrogate in dealing with external stakeholders and providing leadership and support to internal stakeholders.

Finally, the COO will actively communicate with members of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and will insure that Commission board materials are prepared and submitted on a timely basis, that Board agendas support the completion of the Commission's statutory functions and the accomplishment of Department goals, and that the Commission meetings are efficiently run. This role is best summarized through the following activities and responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership

- Ensuring that department work plans and program activities align with CCHE's mission and vision and remain on course to accomplish short, medium and long term goals.
- Leading strategic planning efforts and ensuring that statutory requirements and post-secondary system needs are successfully met;
- When appropriate, convening staff, constituents, and partners for review and discussion of departmental initiatives and issues that impact Colorado's post-secondary system;
- Assisting the Executive Director in developing and articulating the strategic message of the Department and CCHE among all stakeholders and constituents; and
- Fostering the establishment of a "team" ethic within the Department and leading efforts to implement a unified vision and shared goals for all divisions

Policy and Advocacy

- Assisting and supporting department staff in developing and advocating for the CCHE's master plan and related initiatives;
- Translating policy concepts found in CCHE plans into specific policy actions;
- Advancing and aligning Colorado's higher education agenda with national best practices
- In partnership with the Assistant Deputy Director of Information and Research, coordinating and managing the development of research allowing the Department and the CCHE to remain proactive while addressing current and timely needs of the field;
- Representing the DHE externally and supporting the Executive Director with relationships and connections;
- Coordinating assistance to college campuses and external partners for the successful implementation of CCHE initiatives and, as necessary, grant opportunities; and
- Overseeing the development of department policies, ensuring their connection to broad state-level objectives and CCHE master plan priorities.

Operations and Management

- Coordinating the internal management of the Department, including hiring and managing staff, developing and managing grants, overseeing operations, including the Department's operating budget in partnership with the Department's Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director;
- Identifying capacity gaps and needs and creating hiring plans that acknowledge and plan for future directions of the department that align with the CCHE's mission and vision.
- Providing coaching and expertise to the DHE team; developing professional development plans for all staff; and
- Coordinating DHE's administrative operations related to spending, accounts payable and monitoring accounts receivable in partnership with Department's Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director.

Minimum Qualifications

- 10 years training and experience in higher education administration;
- An advanced degree in higher education, public policy, business, or a related field from an accredited institution of higher education;
- Experience in policy development and implementation, including knowledge of the executive and legislative branches of state government;
- Strong verbal and written communication skills;
- Experience working with elected officials and individuals in leadership positions in higher education, including academic, student affairs and administrative and budget leaders;
- 8 years of experience in managing staff and working in a collaborative setting, including strong problem solving and interpersonal skills;
- The capacity to pay attention to detail while taking a long-term, strategic approach to policy issues;
- Proven track record of managing projects and people;
- Demonstrated ability to build a team of diverse individuals to accomplish shared goals for an organization.

Preferred Qualifications

- Familiarity with Colorado's system of Public Higher Education, including its unique funding structure;
- 5 years of experience in a leadership role at a Colorado institution of higher education;
- 10 + years training and experience in higher education;
- 12 + years of experience in managing staff and working in a collaborative setting, including strong problem solving and interpersonal skills;
- 3 + years of experience working with elected and appointed officials;
- 3 + years working with business and community leaders on higher education issues;
- Fluency in a second language, preferably Spanish.

Salary is commensurate with education and experience.

This position is non-classified and exempt from the rules of the Colorado State Personnel Board.

Employment is contingent upon successful completion of a criminal background check.

Application Procedures

To be considered for this position, candidates must possess the minimum qualifications listed above and submit a complete application package, which includes the following:

1. **Letter of Application**
2. **Resume or Vitae**
3. **Three Employment References**

Submit your completed application materials to:

Cindy Langan
Human Resource Director
Colorado Department of Higher Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1600
Denver, CO 80202
clangan@college-assist.org

The Colorado Department of Higher Education is an Equal Opportunity employer. In compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws, the Department does not discriminate in matters of employment based on disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, religion, age, national origin, or ancestry.